



September 16, 2004

Postal clerk is found guilty of embezzlement

A federal jury has found **Kevin J. Hackett**, 41, a Postal Service clerk, guilty of embezzling nearly \$37,000 at a Postal Service branch office on Smith Street, Providence. Evidence at the trial showed that Hackett made a series of false bookkeeping entries to cover his embezzlement and falsely reported a robbery the day before his books were to be audited.

United States Attorney Robert Clark Corrente announced the guilty verdict, which the jury returned on September 13 in U.S. District Court, Providence, after a four-day trial and about two hours of deliberation. Hackett, of 94 Caporal Street, Cranston, is free on unsecured bond pending sentencing, which is scheduled for December 10.

During the trial, Assistant U.S. Attorney Richard W. Rose presented evidence that, between January and May of 2003, Hackett stole \$36,988 from the branch office, known as the North Finance Station, where he was the supervisory clerk. The office sells stamps and money orders and maintains P.O. boxes.

Evidence presented at the trial showed that Hackett used a series of deceptive bookkeeping entries to survive an audit in May 2003. Assistant U.S. Attorney Rose argued to the jury that, fearing that an audit in September would uncover his theft, Hackett falsely reported a robbery at the branch office the evening before the scheduled audit. Although Hackett had injuries to his hand and the back of his head, Postal Inspectors became suspicious about the robbery claim because the branch office did not appear as if a robbery had taken place and

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because the amount of money missing – almost \$40,000 – was the same as a shortfall in Hackett's accounts that dated back several months.

The jury found Hackett guilty of six charges: theft of postal funds and five counts of making fraudulent entries in postal accounting records. The statutory maximum penalty for each offense is ten years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. Federal sentencing is determined on the basis of guidelines that rely on such factors as the specific nature of an offense and a defendant's criminal background, if any.

The **United States Postal Inspection Service** investigated the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Rose is prosecuting it.

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